My dear Tom

Tolfa - Civita Vecchia
Sun. August 10th 1873

Yours of the 23rd ult. is a joy to me as it is by your own dear hand, tho' I'm sensible that it must have cost you some trouble & even pain.

But you tell me much interesting news, that Charles found you walking in your Street, that you went in a Cab with dear Ellen to visit some friends that you found it a very pleasant change, but that you cannot walk out without a keeper. Altogether I cannot but think you much improved.

Then you tell me that Marcia is a "Capital Walker" & that she often goes to see you.

I see that you have got the great heat of S.P. which is just what I have got here & I will confess that it has taken all the shine out of me, & made me weak & unable to take my long walks, that is in a morning stroll I went up to the old Castle some 2 miles & had a head ache when I came down, so that the Suns heat was not for me. Then another morning I went to my favorite wood of Chestnut trees when to my horror I found them all cuts down so that I have no encouragement in walking & only go just outside the town where I meet a "cheek-smoothing breeze" as Leigh Hunt used to say & this

is not more than 2 miles in all. - But as yet we have not had any rain, the harvest is getting in & we are almost burnt up. - In England you get a smack of rain now & then which must be very reviving

You remember I contemplated going to pay you a visit this summer, but I could not collect strength enough for so long a journey & might have been left on the road (to Paradise) for here altho only 70 miles I arrived quite done up & could not have gone a step further. - But the heat in Rome was very oppressive & as I was finishing my two pictures, & did finish them yet the heat & pictures almost finished me & so I scampered off to Tolfa but even here the heat was so great that I was afraid to take the baths. At last I have taken one & it has done me good in relieving me of the restlessness ("Tarantia") caused by the excessive heat

This summer I am occupied in writing & painting at present I am calling up all my recollections of Keats in notes to the beautiful poem of "Adonais" by Shelley in which he mentions me - I have a good & vivid memory but I am difficult to satisfy myself, yet as I have new & interesting matter I must persevere & more so as Lord Houghton is preparing a

a splendid new edition of his life of Keats & the Poems.
all this I had done when some one stole all my papers
& left me to do it all over again - 'tis true I receive
many admirers of Keats both American & English &
some one with an overflowing love carried off all my
papers - As I know of a Novel being in progress on the
subject of my friendship for the illustrious Poet, so I
may see my scribbling again - I think I told Maria
that the great preacher Rev^d Stopford Brooke preached
a sermon on my friendship for my Son Walter is to have
a copy of it & you shall have it in due course
The picture I am preparing is of Keats, Shelley & myself
when I drew Keats picture & Shelley read his essay on
on Poetry - I trust I may live to accomplish all these
interesting works - my eyesight is good & my hand is
steady & one of the pictures I have finished the are 6
figures not more than 5 inches high & yet I was able
to finish it highly - One thing is pleasant I am able now
to work for myself & not care about the snubbing
I've met - I am consoled that all my works are in the
collection of Noblemen & Sovereigns & I have never
had to supplicate picture dealers! like the present
race of Artists - I may hope that my sight & hand

me for every thing & as the Doctor keeps a good table I can ask a f.d to dinner, Lately an English Countess paid us a visit for a week & now sends us fruit & eggs every week

Sometimes I have but few visits & my pictures are but little seen, is it that I begin to live too long!! for now I have seen 4 generations — There was the grandfather Sharpe, then his son & then Ellis & now Edwin Ellis — I often mistake grandson for son & am continually taken for Walter & people ask me about my Father & Keats!!

Yet altogether I feel myself to be very fortunate, particularly in my last bit of Consul & pension for painting here seems at an end & the artists are leaving, a new race of English people very inferior now visit Rome & very few Nobles — My love to Tom & all his dear ones & brother Charles to whom I ought to have written this, but I'll save him out soon — Your loving brother Joe